

# Surrendering August

*by* Michael Gillan Maxwell

## Surrendering August

early evening, late summer  
walking down the lake road with the dogs  
the sound of a tractor mowing the field above  
grinding and clanking  
tall grasses pulsate with cricket song  
the water, placid and serene  
opalescent pink and turquoise  
a fish surfaces and dives  
leaving ripples in concentric rings  
on the far shore, in the vineyards  
timed charges explode like the sun catching on fire  
it scares crows away from the grapes  
warm sunny afternoons and chilly evenings  
sumac leaves, blood crimson  
splashed across the blue forever  
mornings laden with fog banks and soaking dew  
migrating flocks wheel across the sky  
air still warm from the day, but soon changing  
into the fecund smell of damp coolness  
black walnut trees already starting to turn  
shedding golden leaves that flutter  
like tears onto green grass  
last to arrive and the first to go  
a little girl rides her bike, training wheels still on  
stops at the foot of the steep hill  
she'll be climbing before long  
but not for a while  
kids going back to school  
pinching their noses shut  
as they hurl themselves off the dock

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into the cool blue water  
already a memory  
the season slipping away  
away, like this day  
like youth gobbled up  
by the unremitting passage of time  
it feels over too soon  
already ending when it seems  
it's only just begun  
the pale rider draws closer  
with each trip around the sun  
I stand at the edge of the shoreline  
the edge of the season  
surrendering August

